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fear the enmity, or to stand in need of the help of malignants.

(*The Answer from John Milton in our part.*)

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*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

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THE following little essay will, I hope, be acceptable to the readers of your publication, and cause more reasonable allowance to be made for the feelings of the female mind, than is generally admitted.

Although in many respects the condition of females is peculiarly happy in this country, yet they suffer one species of injustice, on which no comment has ever been made.

If they become sufficiently acquainted with those who seek them as wives, to discover in the character of their suitors any latent cause of future disquiet, and therefore reject one whom they have necessarily kept for some time in suspense, they are stigmatized by the name of jilts, and very often incur great odium, for that act of their lives, which may have given the strongest proof of their rectitude and firmness.

According to the common practice of society, a woman is justly apprehensive of becoming so well acquainted with a man's character and manners, as she ought to be, previous to her marriage, lest she should incur a sort of tacit engagement to accept him: and it is to be feared, many have sacrificed their happiness to overstrained notions of delicacy on this subject, and to the apprehension of censure from the public voice, always so loudly exerted against the timid and defenceless.

The female sex, ever so ready to blame each other, act in a most impolitic manner, when they thus en-

deavour to diminish their own circle of choice, and power of deciding on their future friends, protectors, and—masters! For there will always be found a few to assert that right, which courtesy leaves dormant, and affection abrogates.

Some men have even become enemies for life to her, who has refused them on mature consideration, and sufficient knowledge of their disposition and habits. To this, however, there have been a few shining exceptions; and perhaps a man never appears in a more amiable light, than when he watches, as a disinterested friend and protector, over the woman who has rejected the offer of his hand.

Such was the conduct of Benevolus, who met Florella at a bathing place, where they had every opportunity, from the habits of the society, of being well known to each other. Florella, a very young widow, who knew but little of the world, appreciated the excellencies of the head and heart of Benevolus; but from the disparity of their ages, and the seriousness of his temper, as contrasted with the vivacity of hers, it never occurred to her mind, that he could think of her as a wife. She was not unused to find her conversation sought for by the old, the sedate, and even the learned, therefore, his assiduities were received by her without reflection or surprise.

Her rejection of his hand, however, surprised him, and although her heart acquitted her, she appeared faulty in his eyes. Yet, under this impression, he wrote the following letter, where gentleness and good breeding seem to have dictated every line, and given grace to the language of mild reproof.

“DEAR MADAM,

“THE politeness with which you have treated me on a late occasion,

demands my earliest acknowledgments: you have set me gently aside, without pushing me rudely from you.

"As I know from my present feelings, that it is not in my nature to pass suddenly from love to hatred, and as your youth, beauty, and delicate health, are entitled to every attention and kindness possible, you will not, I trust, mistake my motives, when thus, at taking leave, I earnestly beseech you to be cautious in future, how you attempt to raise hopes you are not disposed to realize.

"That you once loved sincerely and ardently, I need not be told: it was indeed from the united testimony of various persons, with regard to your character as a wife, and your conduct since you ceased to be so, that I was induced to make you that offer which has since proved unsuccessful.

"The fortunate man who may be destined to touch your heart, will have my best wishes for the continuance of that life, in which his happiness will of course be involved.

"I have the honour to remain, dear Madam, your most sincere friend and servant."

Florella excused the mistake of Benevolus in favour of his sincerity. Any little resentment he might have felt, evaporated in the gentle reproof of this letter, and she found him through life, a valuable, disinterested, and enlightened friend.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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**T**HE mere attachment or indifference that may be shown by particular persons to particular pursuits, amounts to very little in establishing their worth, or in proving

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their insignificance. Even the general current of public opinion should not, in all cases, be resorted to as a proper rule by which to judge.

Particular situations in life, and particular modes of education, may operate very forcibly in giving to the mind a particular bias, and therefore it is but reasonable to judge as liberally as we can of those, who may, from different causes, differ from us on some points of argument; but I believe it will be found, on careful examination, that greater degrees of importance are attached to the consideration of some pursuits, than what the subject will really admit. In this view I consider the essay on Music, in the Magazine for December, signed "Marcellus," and I would wish to make a few observations thereon. In doing which I desire to guard against a censoriousness or narrowness of disposition, too generally indulged when treating of matters which do not exactly correspond with our ideas, or that may not just come up to the standard we have formed. It is neither my business nor intention to condemn that writer for cultivating a taste for music; neither do I wish to deprive him of any gratification he may enjoy in pursuing his favourite amusement; but I very much object to his manner of reasoning on the subject, and to the conclusions he draws.

I think facts could be produced, to prove that the unqualified assertions of which he makes use, are not strictly justifiable. I cannot subscribe to the soundness of the sentiment, that a want of taste in this particular, is characteristic of moral depravity. It would certainly be an unsafe criterion by which to judge the disposition of any man, and as difficult to prove his real character from his possessing or not possessing a taste for music. Depravity of character

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